

Bi-Weekly Update from County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott, 10/10/14:



National Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a chance to raise awareness about the importance of early detection of breast cancer. Please spread the word about mammograms and encourage communities, organizations, families, and individuals to get involved.

FLRSB to Continue Grant Application Consideration on 10/17

The FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board (FLRSB) will meet next on **Friday, October 17**, to continue the process of selecting projects submitted for the 2014 Discretionary Grant program. The FLRSB, chaired by County Board Chair Art Kale, set aside \$185,000 this year that can be awarded to any local unit of government for any lawful governmental purpose. The Board received 34 grant applications totaling \$1.2 million in requests for various projects with costs spanning from \$3,000 to \$335,000. The FLRSB reviewed on September 19 a compiled summary of the grant requests, but did not take any action to select or eliminate any of them. All funding decisions of the FLRSB require a unanimous vote among the six members representing Calhoun County, the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi Tribe, Emmett and Athens Townships, and the Cities of Battle Creek and Marshall. Next week's meeting is at 1:30 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners Chambers, on the third floor of the County Building in Marshall. All meetings are open to the public.

Veterans Affairs Committee Seeks Member to Fill Vacancy

Under the Leadership of Chairman Rodger Seidel, the Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee met on October 8 in a regularly scheduled meeting to hear updates on the newly implemented Strategic Plan. County Administrator Kelli Scott and Assistant County Administrator Brad Wilcox attended the meeting and provided information on plans for enhanced use of technology and social media to provide more outreach and better equip the department to be responsive to emergent needs of our veterans within the county. Director Scott Losey and Service Officer Kristina Higgins also indicated that they are exploring software specific to veterans affairs offices across the state, and the e-benefits feature being considered in conjunction with other technology improvements. ***The Committee is currently seeking one new member*** to fill a vacant seat. Members shall be county residents and have served honorably on active duty in the armed forces as volunteers or regulars or women marines, or who served actively in a war in which the United States has been, is, or may hereafter be a participant as defined in Title 38 of the United States Code, 38 U.S.C. 101 to 8528, including the conflict in Vietnam. The Veterans Affairs Committee ***meets at 2:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month*** at the Department office on the third floor of the Toeller Building at 190 E. Michigan Avenue in Battle Creek. Interested residents may apply online by clicking on the Application for Appointment box at http://www.calhouncountymi.gov/government/board_of_commissioners/boards_and_committees/, or by contacting the Veterans Affairs Office at 269.969.6735 or slosey@calhouncountymi.gov.

New Managing Director for the Road Department

In continuation of our collaborative agreement with Jackson County's Department of Transportation, Calhoun County and Jackson County have jointly selected a new Managing Director for our road departments. **Christopher Bolt** is a professional civil engineer and has a Master of Public Administration degree from Western Michigan University, and brings over 22 years of experience in the public works profession. He will start his new role on Monday, October 13, and will lead the completion of summer and fall road maintenance projects, and then transition quickly to ensure winter maintenance plans are in place. Mr. Bolt will be an official employee of Jackson County, and will report to both Calhoun County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott, and Jackson County Administrator/Controller Michael Overton. Both county administrators have expressed the belief that Christopher has the education and experience we need to continue our successful multicounty Road Department model.

County Employee Benefits Renewal Yields LOWER Costs for 2015!

Under the leadership of Kim Archambault, the County's HR/Labor Relations Director, our benefits committee, consisting of employees representing a cross-section of county government offices, met this week to determine final employee benefit renewal information for 2015. Employee Health Insurance is through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan as third party administrator, and because we are a larger employer, we are self-insured, meaning we pay all actual claims costs for health care services provided. We have engaged a benefits consultant to help provide market data and recommend strategies for Calhoun County to continue to offer quality benefits for our employees while controlling costs. The County Board of Commissioners has also complied with Public Act 152 of 2011, limiting public employers' contributions toward employee medical insurance costs to limits set by the State each year.

From 2014 to 2015, the County's **employee health insurance rates are decreasing by 5.4%** overall, beating national trends and despite medical inflation and the implementation of the Affordable Care Act! We will continue to charge employees 20% of the cost for our base plan, allow them to buy up to a more expensive plan, and provide a high deductible plan with Health Savings Accounts as the third option. The majority of our employees are enrolled in the high deductible plan, which has continued to drive down our claims costs. Next year employees will see a decrease in payroll deductions for all three plans. It should also be noted that the County's new Care Here Health & Wellness Center, which opened in February of this year, continues to gain popularity among employees. The new center is expected to provide significant savings in health care costs that will be factored into future years' rates.

County employees will also benefit from small improvements to their dental and vision coverage through the use of some of the health insurance cost savings.

Bid Opportunities

Businesses large and small should be aware of opportunities to provide goods and services to Calhoun County, as we want to ensure that all interested suppliers are given a fair and equal opportunity to bid on County business. Our Goal is to obtain the best value and service possible for public funds spent, at all times maintaining the highest standards of business ethics in our dealings with suppliers. Supplying all departments of the County is the responsibility of the Calhoun County Purchasing Department, located on the third floor of the Calhoun County Building, 315 West Green Street, Marshall, MI 49068, (269) 781-0981 or Fax (269) 781-0140.

The procurement function is accomplished by competitive bidding based on pre-determined specifications. So, if you're marketing a product or service Calhoun County could use, the **first step is to register as a vendor** with the County. The vendor registration process can be done online through our website at this address: <http://www.calhouncountymi.gov/vendors/registration/>. For vendors without internet access, Vendor Application forms are available from the Purchasing Department. Once businesses are registered, they will receive requests for quotations or bids based on the product or services listed within the registration information. Vendors are encouraged to maintain up-to-date information with the County.

Bid opportunities, awards and bid instructions are also online as public information, at http://www.calhouncountymi.gov/government/administrative_services/bid_opportunities/. **Our current active bids include: Inmate Medical Services, and Auditing Services.**

Job Openings

Calhoun County currently employs approximately over 600 employees within 25 departments at various locations throughout the County. The County posts all job openings on our website at http://www.calhouncountymi.gov/employment/job_postings/. There are **currently several job postings available** in offices throughout the county government, including the Treasurer's Office, the Health Department, and District and Circuit Courts. Job seekers are reminded to check back often for new postings, as we only accept applications for open positions. The County Human Resources Office is on the third floor of the County Building at 315 W. Green St. in Marshall, and can be reached at 269.781.0980.